

Mayor's Advisory Committee on Accessibility

May 17, 2016 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Fletcher Room, Fletcher Free Library

Meeting was called to order at 4:08pm with Cleary Buckley serving as facilitator for the meeting.

Committee members, City staff, and guests present – Ralph Montefusco, Nate Besio, Cleary Buckley, Leah Soderquist (guest), Tony Reddington (guest), Emma Allen, Ned Holt, Jordan Posner (guest), Lauren Pyatt (City), David Clark (guest), Lisa DeNatale (guest), David Pepper (guest), Gabriel Brunelle (guest), Ron Redmond.

Cleary reviewed the agenda with group.

Ralph Montefusco moved to approve the minutes. Seconded and passed by all.

Floor was opened for public comments. No public comment.

Appointments

Michael Watson and Shelly Waterman are stepping down from the committee when their appointment terms end in June. That leaves two vacancies, which will be filled by Nate Besio and Gabriel Brunelle, who have expressed interest in joining the committee. Committee appointments are three year terms and these two appointments will start in June 2016.

Lauren is following up with the Mayor's office for clarification on the next steps of the appointment process and if there is a residency requirement for the committee.

Social Media

Using Front Porch Forum to warn the meeting worked out very well for increasing attendance at the meeting.

CEDO has a limited number of city-wide FPF postings each month, so the committee should look for more resources they can use to reach out to the community about committee meetings.

Suggested to add the meetings to the CCTV Community Calendar on Channel 17 and the Across the Fence New Hour.

The Vermont Interfaith Network also has a list serve that the committee could use to send out meeting announcements.

Lauren Pyatt now has administrator privileges for the Accessibility Committee Group on Facebook. Emma Allen and Cleary Buckley are both interested in being made admins as well.

Ron Redmond said that the Church Street Marketplace could cover the cost of the committee buying a Front Porch Forum subscription for making monthly citywide postings about events.

Transportation

Floor opened for comments from the public on the topic of transportation.

Tony Reddington, the AARP Rep for the BTV Walk/Bike Plan and member of the Walk/Bike Council, spoke about roundabouts and how they would be beneficial and safer for anyone who walks and wheels around the city.

Jordan Posner, Mobility Management Coordinator for the CCTA, spoke about the new paratransit committee that they just started recently. Anyone interested in joining the committee can contact him for details. This group is the direct line of contact on paratransit issues to their Board of Commissioners. Their meetings are the 1st Thursday of the month at 4pm at the CCTA offices.

CCTA administers paratransit services like SSTA, which provides services for anyone unable to ride fixed ride buses.

Ralph noted that while load times for helping customers with mobility issues are built into the time schedules, there still seems to be a disconnect with drivers and dispatch about route times and wait times and asked if there was a way to reconcile this in the future.

Jordan gave clarifications on how ADA/SSTA rides are coordinated and Medicare rides. There is an application and reassessment process for ADA rides and rides are limited to anywhere a bus goes and ¾ of a mile of where regular fixed buses go.

Medicaid has a different set of rules and their rides need to be booked 48 hours in advance and before 5PM on the day of scheduling.

Gabriel Brunelle shared again with the group the issues he's had with scheduling taxi rides for medical appointments and how he's been charged significantly higher rates than normal taxis cost for requesting handicap accessible ones from taxi companies.

SSTA service to Tilley Drive Medical Center is coordinated by CCTA. It is scheduled to run on the hour, but you must call to set up a pick up for the shuttle to run. CCTA is currently considering what changes might be needed to this system.

For the new CCTA Transit Center they are installing automated stop announcements and signage announcements for bus lines using GPS data.

There are concerns about the bus alignments with the new transit center and that they will cause pedestrians to have to cross in front of buses set to leave the station causing potential conflict between the two. Concerns on how this could negatively affect those with vision impairments and our accessibility issues should be considered.

Nate Besio had questions about the robocall service that SSTA uses to notify riders about any changes to their rides. Jordan noted that all riders can call the SSTA dispatch and they will be able to help with any rider problems.

Taxis will be the next discussion topic for the June meeting. Cleary will reach out to the City staff who work with the new Vehicle for Hire Licensing Board to see if they are able to come to the next meeting.

Announcements

The City's HR department has just completed the last of their VCIL (Vermont Center for Independent Living) training around hiring practices.

United Way's Neighbor Rides Coordinator are recruiting riders to help take part in their Transit Planning For All meetings that will help them utilize a new grant they just received. Plans are in the works for meetings at Decker Towers and other locations with high rider usage. Contact Leah Soderquist for more details at leah@unitedwaynwvt.org

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, June 21st from 4-6PM. Cleary Buckley will facilitate the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:03PM